

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

SCCT-01 OMB-01 /058 W

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R 111136Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9443

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COMUSMACTHAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 16599

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TH

SUBJ: INSURGENTS ATTACK BPP POST IN CHAWANG DISTRICT OF
NAKHON SI THAMMARAT PROVINCE

1. A COMMUNIST TERRORIST (CT) FORCE ESTIMATED AT 200 MEN
ATTACKED AND OVERRAN PART OF A 30-MAN BORDER PATROL POLICE
(BPP) POST IN CHAWANG DISTRICT OF NAKHON SI THAMMARAT (NST)
PROVINCE ON AUGUST 9. FRIENDLY LOSSES WERE TEN BPP KIA,
NINE WIA AND ONE MIA, WHILE CONFIRMED CT CASUALTIES WERE FIVE KIA.
THE THREE ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS IN BANGKOK REPORTED
DISTORTED VERSIONS OF THE ATTACK IN AUGUST 9 AND 10 ISSUES.

2. ACCORDING TO INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO ISOC AS OF AUGUST 10,
THE ATTACK BEGAN AT 0300 HOURS ON AUGUST 9. THE CT CAUGHT
THE BPP SLEEPING (THE POST COMMANDER, A LIEUTENANT, WAS
ABSENT AND A BPP SERGEANT, ONE OF THE KIA, WAS TEMPORARILY
IN CHARGE) AND OCCUPIED THE PERIMETER BUNKERS, FROM
WHICH THEY SPRAYED THE POST WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS AND
FIRED M-79 GRENADE LAUNCHERS. THE BPP WITHDREW TO THE
TWO-STORY RADIO SHACK AND SENT A MESSAGE TO THE BPP SUB-
DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS AT CHAWANG, INFORMING THEM OF THE
ATTACK. THE CT ENTERED THE RADIO SHACK AND KILLED FIVE
BPP ON THE FIRST FLOOR. FIVE MORE BPP ON THE SECOND
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FLOOR WERE ALSO KILLED, APPARENTLY FROM CT FIRE UP THROUGH

THE FLOOR FROM INSIDE THE BUILDING OR THROUGH THE UPPER STORY WALLS FROM THE OUTSIDE. AT LEAST TWO OF THE CT WERE KILLED IN THE RADIO SHACK, EITHER FROM GRENADES THAT WENT OFF WHEN THEY WERE EXAMINING THE DEAD BPP OR FROM THE BPP FIRE.

3. BPP REINFORCEMENTS (STRENGTH UNKNOWN) WITH ONE ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER (PROBABLY AN ARMORED CAR) SET OUT FROM THE CHAWANG BPP SUB-DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS TO REINFORCE THE POST, LOCATED NEAR BAN SAILAPHAO IN TAMBON LA-AI (NK 695395); HOWEVER, BAD TERRAIN (AND PROBABLY CAUTION) SLOWED THEM DOWN. THE REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVED WHILE THE CT WERE STILL ATTACKING BUILDINGS INSIDE THE POST. UPON ARRIVAL OF THE BPP REINFORCEMENTS, REPORTEDLY ACCOMPANIED BY THE NST GOVERNOR AND BPP REGION 8 COMMANDER, THE CT WITHDREW AFTER TRYING TO BURN THE POST AND SHOOTING OUT THE TIRES OF TWO ARMORED CARS. THE CT CARRIED OFF WEAPONS AND DOCUMENTS CAPTURED FROM THE POST.

4. THE REINFORCING PARTY APPARENTLY OCCUPIED THE COMPOUND AFTER THE CT LEFT, BUT DID NOT PURSUE THE CT FOR FEAR THEY WOULD BE AMBUSHED IN THE JUNGLE. THE ACTION SEEMS TO HAVE STOPPED AT ABOUT 0600 HOURS WHEN THE REINFORCING PARTY BEGAN SENDING MESSAGES OUT. THE NINE BPP WIA WERE EVACUATED TO THE PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL BY HELICOPTER.

5. THE FIVE CT KIA WERE DRESSED IN GREEN FATIGUES AND CAPS SIMILAR TO THOSE WORN BY CHINESE COMMUNISTS SOLDIERS, AND APPEARED TO BE 35-45 YEARS OF AGE. THE BPP BELIEVE THAT THE CT SUFFERED OTHER CASUALTIES, BUT THAT THEY WERE CARRIED OFF BY THE CT WHEN THEY WITHDREW FROM THE BPP POST.

WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TERRORISTS, COMBAT OPERATIONS, DEATHS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BANGKO16599
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750276-0734
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750862/aaaacciu.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <24 JUL 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INSURGENTS ATTACK BPP POST IN CHAWANG DISTRICT OF NAKHON SI THAMMARAT PROVINCE
TAGS: PINS, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006